

member of his crew, both officers and enlisted. Although being a Commander alone warrants respect, his men respect him for more than that. They respect him because of who he is.

Mr. Speaker, Comdr. Roy Balaconis is a truly dynamic leader, and is definitely an asset to the U.S. Navy and our country. His accomplishments are certainly deserving of our recognition and praise.

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

### HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 22, 1995*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it has been said that the 1995 National Black History theme represents a milestone in the life of black Americans. It causes us to reflect on the visions of three men who were repressed by slavery, disillusioned by the Bill of Rights, and despite these setbacks—championed the cause for freedom through vigilant and aggressive action.

These three individuals, Frederick Douglas, W.E.B. DuBois, and Booker T. Washington, were prolific scholars and great leaders.

Their determination to change the course of history for black Americans, planted the seeds of progress that later blossomed into the political and economic freedom that we continue to cultivate. The course of history for black Americans was greatly influenced by these three giants, whose visions have seen a nation through 300 years of conflict.

As we celebrate Black History Month, it is important to remember these men \* \* \* who have been termed our first "civil rights generals" in a war that seems to never end.

Mr. Speaker, I want to use my time today to pay tribute to a group of Americans who have given their lives in wars of a different kind: Black Americans who have proudly served their country in the military.

It is not news that more than 25 percent of the young men and women who served our country in the Persian Gulf were black. Were it not for the more than 100,000 thousand black soldiers, sailors, and airmen, former President Bush probably could not have launched the war to drive Saddam Hussein from Kuwait.

Nor is it news, Mr. Speaker, that a disproportionate number of black Americans served in Vietnam. But it is important to remember that black Americans have served in every battle in which this country was ever engaged.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we can go all the way back to the American Revolution, the first war in our country's history. In the most serious clash between the Americans and the British—the Boston Massacre of 1770—one of the five colonists who fell in action was a runaway slave, Crispus Attucks.

Gen. Andrew Jackson, this country's seventh President, heaped the greatest praise upon the thousands of black soldiers who played a decisive role in the War of 1812.

In the Civil War—this country's bloodiest battle—the question for blacks was this: Would they remain loyal to their immediate oppressors who owned them outright, or would they sacrifice their very lives for the freedom of their race and their country?

The answer was simple. Nearly 200,000 black combat troops fought in the Union Army, and one in every four men in the Union Navy was black.

In this country's First World War, the most famous of the eight Black regiments was unquestionably the "Fighting 369th." In 1918, this unit went into action and remained on the front lines for 191 consecutive days—"Without losing a trench, retreating an inch, or surrendering a prisoner."

Upon their triumphant return to this country, Dr. W.E.B. DuBois served notice on America that returning black servicemen meant to realize full equality under the law as first-class citizens. He said:

We stand again to look America squarely in the face. It lynches, It disenfranchises, It insults us.—we return fighting. Make way for democracy. We saved it in France, and we will save it in the U.S.A.

On the infamous morning of December 7, 1941, when Japanese fighters flew over Pearl Harbor and rained a hail of bombs and bullets on the slumbering U.S. Naval Base, Dorie Miller, a black messman, was going about his duties collecting the laundry, when the sounds of battle sirens and exploding shells rent the air.

Miller rushed up on deck, and instantly hauled his wounded captain to safety. Moments later, he sprung into action behind an anti-aircraft gun he had never been trained to operate.

Firing calmly and accurately, he brought down four zero fighter planes before the cry to abandon ship was heeded by all survivors. On May 7, 1942, this great seaman was cited for bravery by Fleet Adm. Chester Nimitz, who decorated him with a Silver Star, and so acknowledged the Nation's debt to a black man of "extraordinary courage."

Mr. Speaker, as a child I can remember assisting my father in his plans to welcome home Dorie Miller, a fellow Texan. As a Member of congress, I have introduced legislation to pay the appropriate tribute to this great American, who fought so nobly for his country, the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The experience of settling America, and the burden of defending it, have been shared by many groups of people. As one historian has noted—blacks, too, have built this Nation, forged its destiny in peace, and defended it in war. Black men and women began serving America long before the Nation had come into being, and have fought long and honorably in every major American conflict since.

America is free because, as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "Though they have often been reduced to a 'fifty percent citizen' on American soil, black soldiers have always been one hundred percent citizens in warfare."

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting and proper that we recognize and honor the vast contributions to this Nation's military history, and this country's freedom, by black men and women who have fought and died for a better world.

## AMADOR HIGH SCHOOL RECOGNITION

### HON. BILL BAKER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 23, 1995*

Mr. BAKER of California. Mr. Speaker it is with great pleasure that I commend an outstanding group of young people from Amador Valley High School in Pleasanton, CA, who have, for the second year in a row, won the California championship in the State's annual "Bill of Rights" competition.

This superb program, the full title of which is "We the People . . . the Citizen and the Constitution," encourages debate and speech competition among high school students as they discuss the meaning of the Constitution for our day. The competition, established by the U.S. Congress and the Department of Education, is a dynamic way of encouraging young men and women to consider the ongoing importance of the Constitution to our daily lives.

The Amador Valley team, ably coached by civics teacher Skip Mohatt, is now raising funds to come to the national championship competition in here in Washington, April 29 through May 2. Having placed third in last year's national contest, they are eager to come back and compete again.

These teenagers are discovering in an exciting way how our amazing Constitution continues to enable us to live as a free people. They deserve high praise for their commitment to academic excellence, energetic scholarship, and true intellectual curiosity. I am pleased to commend them in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

## HONORING MR. ROBERT L. CALLAHAN

### HON. JOHN LINDER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 23, 1995*

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend a fellow citizen of the State of Georgia and a great American, Mr. Robert L. Callahan, Jr. Over nearly 35 years of legal practice in the field of administrative law, Mr. Callahan has made tremendous and far-reaching contributions to the development of administrative law in general, as well as to the development of food and drug law in particular. He has been a tireless worker, without fanfare or public recognition, in support of common sense and fair play in the practice of law. Mr. Callahan's efforts have helped to shape much of a U.S. system of food law and regulation that is generally taken for granted but which literally affects every American daily.

It is because of these accomplishments that I ask my colleagues to join me today in this commendation of Mr. Robert L. Callahan, Jr.